1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 Ryk Koryak Ryk

Koryak consisted of families bound together by ties of blood or marriage or by economic relations, — the poor and weak were vassals of the rich and strong, — but these ties were based only in part on consanguinity; and the elders, elected as directed by the Russian Government, were not the natural heads of their communities. The representative principle itself has been accepted very superficially. Among the Maritime Koryak a few old men of the settlement meet, and, if any one points out a man of executive ability, the others give him their support. The results of these elections are communicated to the chief of the district, either directly or through the Cossacks. The district chief reports to the Governor of the Maritime Province residing in Vladivostok, who confirms the elder in his office. The elder generally remains in office for a number of years, and then resigns. Among the Reindeer Koryak these so-called "elections" of elders are still simpler. The elder is always one of the richest men, and is elected according to the instructions of the old men, possessors of herds, who decide the matter at a meeting.

The elder gathers the yasak, and delivers it at the Russian headquarters; he supervises the delivery of dogs by the families in his district, and superintends the people during the passing of Cossacks or the mail, and the visits of the officials, doctor, or minister; and he divides among the inhabitants of the settlement the pay for the transportation of mails. Those Koryak who live away from the main route have no mail to transport, and but seldom furnish free dog or reindeer sledges for the officials.

The elders of the Reindeer Koryak often simplify the fulfilment of the duties above enumerated. Possessing great numbers of reindeer, they furnish their own animals for the transportation of officials, and frequently pay out in their own fur or reindeer-skins the yasak for the entire group. The Taigonos elder, however, exacts the yasak from the members of his group.

During the summer, when communication with the Russians is temporarily suspended, the functions of elders also come to an end, for in no other phase of the family or social life are the elders of any account. Quarrels within the family do not spread beyond its limits, and friction between strangers is checked in one way or another by the parties concerned, without the interference of a recognized authoritative power.

Custom and religious taboos regulate the mutual relations of individuals and families. Frequently the opinions of old men exert a moral pressure on the conduct of the interested parties. All this does not, of course, exclude occasional violence on the part of the stronger man. On the whole, however, the general softening of manners, under the influence of Russian proximity, and possibly to a certain extent the weakening pulse of the primitive vital energy, have of late rendered violence a rare phenomenon.

It must, I think, be admitted that the imposed institution of elders is not devoid of all importance; for, though in a limited degree, it leads to the

1: Jochelson E-5 (1900-01) 1908 RY4 Koryak RY4

practice of the principle of representation, and develops to some extent the authority of representative persons. In Itkana, for instance, the elder, besides paying the yasak of the "clan," makes purchases of flour, powder, and other articles in the official stores, and divides them among the families, whose faith in his impartiality is implicit.

I settled with individual drivers for the transportation of freight or of myself and my associates; but whenever a greater number of sledges was required, I always resorted to the elder of the settlement, who directed me to the men willing to be hired. The details were arranged with the men individually. Once when I had hired skin boats in Penshina Bay, I handed over to the elder the entire pay, consisting of bricks of tea, and he divided them among the owners of the boats and the oarsmen. On one occasion I saw an elder in the Paren settlement take by force the dogs of an old man for the transportation of Cossacks. This quarrelsome old man was dissatisfied with his share of the pay for the transportation of mail allotted to him by the elder, and refused to furnish dogs, as required by the free transportation obligation; whereupon the elder untied by force two dogs of his pack, and harnessed them to one of the sledges. Of course, he could not have done this if the other members of the settlement had not been on his side. On various occasions the elders complained to me of the disobedience of the people. The elder of the Reindeer Koryak of the Taigonos Peninsula, whose personality and riches in reindeer had made him very influential, expressed to me his wish that the Czar might allow lazy herdsmen to be punished. He claimed that young men nowadays were worth nothing. This shows that the elder himself saw the source of his power in the Russian Government, and not in the customs of his people. Russian laws regarding the natives of Siberia, by the way, do authorize the elders to inflict punishment for trivial offences. Of course, the elder did not know this, and, had he known it, could not have acted according to this law, it being opposed to the usages of the Koryak.

In reference to food, Russian influence shows itself in favor of individualistic tendencies as against the tendencies of primitive communism in this matter.

In ancient traditions the ideal hunter is represented as follows. He heaps the results of the chase on the shore, and bids the inhabitants of the settlement divide them among themselves, and he takes for himself only what is left. He sits at a distance and watches how his catch is divided.[1] At the present time this principle is followed to a certain extent in hunting the whale, and even the white whale.[2] When their meat is divided, the entire settlement is invited. In regard to the white whale, however, this custom is not everywhere observed. I think that in reference to the products of hunting and fishing, indications of the principle of work could from the earliest times be

[1] See, for instance, Part I, Tale 94, p. 273.

[2] See Part I, p. 56.

11: Kennan--182-184 T-3 (1865) 1870 Koryak-1-2
116, 554, 622 Reindeer

"They have a leader called a Tyón, who is generally the largest deer-owner of the band, and he decides all such questions as the location of camps and time of removal from place to place; but he has no other power, and must refer all graver questions of individual rights and general obligations to the members of the band collectively. They have no particular reverence for anything or anybody except the evil spirits who bring calamities upon them, and the 'Shamáns' or priests and their victims. Earthly rank [183] they treat with contempt, and the Czar of all the Russias, if he entered a Korak tent, would stand upon the same level with its owner. We had an amusing instance of this soon after we met the first Koraks. The Major had become impressed in some way with the idea that in order to get what he wanted from these natives he must impress them with a proper sense of his power, rank, wealth, and general importance in the world, and make them feel a certain degree of reverence and respect for his orders and wishes. He accordingly called one of the oldest and most influential members of the band to him one day, and proceeded to tell him, through an interpreter, how rich he was; what immense resources, in the way of rewards and punishments, he possessed; what high rank he held; how important a place he filled in Russia, and how becoming it was that an individual of such exalted attributes should be treated by poor wandering heathen with filial reverence and veneration. The old Korak, squatting upon his heels on the ground, listened quietly to the enumeration of all our leader's admirable qualities and perfections without moving a muscle of his face; but finally, when the interpreter had finished, he

rose slowly, walked up to the Major with imperturbable gravity, and with the most benignant and patronizing condescension, patted him softly on the head! The Major turned red and broke out into a laugh; but he never tried again to overawe a Korak.

Notwithstanding this democratic independence of the Koraks, they are almost invariably hospitable, obliging, and kind-hearted; and we were assured at the first en-[184] campment where we stopped, that we would have no difficulty in getting the different bands to carry us on deer-sledges from one encampment to another until we should reach the head of Penzhinsk Gulf."

17:Antropova E-4 (no date) 1964 RY4 Koryak RY4

Among the reindeer-breeding Alyutortsy there were associations of families with small reindeer herds, bound by blood or affinal kinship. The typical correlation of reindeer in a herd owned in common by five households was: 5% + 10% + 20% + 25% + 30% = 90%. The other 10% of the herd usually belonged to sedentary relatives of the reindeer-breeders. Property inequality among the Alyutortsy was less pronounced than it was among the Chavchuvens. There were only a few cases where one of the co-owners in the association owned as much as 60% of the combined herd.

Thus, the backward forms of the Koryaks' subsistence economy fostered the preservation of communal relations among them.

The existence of clan relations among the Koryaks in the past is indicated by a number of aspects of their social life, and particularly by their family and marital ceremonials, which persisted into the first quarter of the 20th century. Among the survivals of clan organization we must note the custom of mutual assistance among related families, the custom forbidding outsiders to use the fire of an unrelated family, the residence (according to 18th-19th-century sources) of several related families in the same dwelling, the custom of vendetta, which survived until the early years of the 20th century, etc. In addition, the coastal Koryaks still retained traces of the institution of elders. In some of the villages there were persons called nym'elgen-an—"the guardian of the place," "the guardian of the past." This position could be held only by a man who was considered a descendant of the founder of the village. Each group of Koryaks headed by a nym'elgen-an had its own wooden image. In addition to the general designation of nym'elgen, the image also had its own name. Some of these names ("swallow," "duck") were of totemic character. Sacrifices were made to the images; they were "fed" and "dressed" in grass clothing.

Family relations at the end of the 19th century were based on patriarchal norms (patrilineal kinship, inheritance from father to son, patrilocal marriage). Along with this, there were survivals of matriarchy, the most distinct of which was the granting of children to the mother in case of divorce.

Among the remnants of extinct forms of group marriage were the surviving custom of the sororate, according to which a widower must marry the younger sister, younger cousin or niece of his dead wife, and the custom of the levirate, according to which a younger brother had to marry the widow of his older brother; in the absence of a brother, this duty devolved on the nephew or cousin of the dead husband. However, such survivals of group marriage as the Chukchi "association by wife" were already unknown among the Koryaks in the 18th century.

The most common method of contracting a marriage was by working for the wife. Under this custom, the groom had to work from 2-3 months to three years in the family of his future father-in-law, taking part in tending reindeer and other tasks. After the expiration of the work period, the groom performed the so-called ceremony of "catching the bride": the bride ran about in the house, and the groom had to catch her, tear her clothing, and touch her bare body. The bride's relative's present at the ceremony tried to hinder this in every way, beat the groom with twigs, pushed him away, and so on.

According to Koryak religion, the whole world was inhabited by a multitude of harmful beings—nin'vit's. The nin'vit's were invisible, but could become visible if they chose. They appeared to people in the form of anthropomorphic creatures, with huge ears, burning eyes (sometimes with one eye, sometimes with three), with long sharp teeth and a body covered with thick black fur. It was thought that the nin'vit's hunted and ate people by entering them and causing illness. To placate the nin'vit's, the Koryaks

23: Krasheninnikov N-3 (1736-40) 1764 Koryak

times to ſet little rods round their huts. When they kill a dog, one perſon holds it by the head, another by the tail, and a third ſtabs it in the ſide; when it is dead they ſtick it upon a ſtake, turning its face towards the neareſt burning mountain.

Their civil policy is as rude as their religious; they know nothing of dividing the year into months; they have names indeed for the four ſeaſons. They have only names for the four cardinal winds. Of the conſtellations they know the Great Bear, which they call, in their language, the wild rein-deer; the Pleiades they name the duck's neſt; and the Milky Way the ſcattered river.

The diſtance of places they reckon by their day's journey, which is between 30 and 50 verſts.

Before they were ſubject to the Empire of *Ruſſia* they never had any government or chief magiſtrate among them, only thoſe that were rich had ſome ſort of authority over the poor; nor before that did they know any thing of an oath. At preſent, inſtead of ſwearing upon the croſs or goſpel, our Coſſacks oblige them to hold a muſquet by the barrel, threatening, that whoever does not obſerve this oath will certainly be ſhot by a ball. This they are ſo much afraid of, that rather than clear themſelves by this oath, if guilty, they will confeſs their crime.

They are quite ignorant of all good manners, not only in common compliments, but in receiving ſtrangers, whom they treat with an air of ſuperiority. When they entertain their gueſts they don't oblige them to over-eat themſelves, as the *Kamtſchadales* do, but give them what they have in ſufficient plenty; their beſt victuals is fat meat, and all theſe barbarous nations are exceſſively fond of fat. The *Jakutſki* would loſe an eye for a piece of fat horſe fleſh, and the *Tchukotſkoi* for a fat dog. The *Jakutſki* know that the ſtealing of any cattle is puniſhed with the loſs of all their goods; yet, if they have an opportunity, they can't reſtrain themſelves from ſtealing a fat horſe, comforting themſelves amidſt